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Dear Islander Families,

We hope this letter finds you well! We miss you and look forward to getting back to school soon. Despite this unprecedented school closure, we are going forward with our preparation for the 20-21 registration process for incoming 7th and 8th grade students. We want to give you an overview of how the process will work during this very unusual time. We will be posting registration packets and guidelines on the website:

1. **Monday, March 23rd**, IMS will be placing short videos on the website about frequently asked questions regarding the registration process. These videos will be the primary method for parents to receive information about topics such as foreign language, fine arts requirements, PE waivers and filling out the registration worksheets.
2. **March 23rd through April 3rd**, all current 6th and 7th graders can review the registration materials on the IMS website (under Students tab on IMS website, see Registration 20-21) and complete the online registration of IMS electives.

Parents who still have questions after watching the videos, reviewing the instructions on course selection, registration materials, and talking with their student are welcome to email our registrar, Marcy Berejka at marcy.berejka@mercerislandschools.org.

By **Friday, April 3rd**, students must have completed the online registration process. Students can plan on turning in their physical completed registration form to their Gator Time teacher, once school resumes.

We hope you will find this process efficient and personalized to meet your needs.

Sincerely,

Weston Lucas, Aaron Miller, and Mary Jo Budzius

2020-2021

Eighth-Grade Curriculum Guide

Eighth Grade

Growing Toward Independence

Islander Middle School teachers support and guide eighth grade students to accept responsibility and prepare to live as productive and contributing citizens. Eighth grade students are expected to take ownership of their learning and are presented with a more rigorous and self-directed curriculum. This type of program capitalizes on students' strengths and allows them to address their weaknesses. Eighth graders are encouraged to think critically and to make logical, responsible and thoughtful decisions.

All 7th and 8th grade students have a fine arts requirements to be completed over the course of their 7th and 8th grade years. Choices include at least a full year of band, orchestra, or choir or the completion of a two trimester Drama (Drama I and Drama II) or Art (Art I and Art II – must be completed in same school year) sequence. Students may also elect to take additional fine arts courses while at IMS.

Required

Language Arts 8
Social Studies 8
Pre-Algebra, or Algebra or Geometry
Science 8
P.E. - 1 Trimester required (May be waived with directed athletics.
Waiver available in the counseling office).

Electives

Choose from the list of Year-Long
and/or Trimester-Long classes

Eighth-Grade Curriculum

Language Arts 8

Eighth-grade Language Arts integrates reading, writing, listening and speaking experiences aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

Students will study a variety of literary genres (short stories, historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy, nonfiction biography, drama, poetry) from adopted eighth-grade curriculum, focusing on both informational/expository and literary/ narrative text. Writing instruction is intentional and integrated within the reading scope and sequence. Students maintain a writing portfolio with evidence from multiple on-demand, and process-pieces to demonstrate progress and proficiency.

Social Studies 8

Eighth-grade Social Studies covers American History from colonization through reconstruction in history, geography, civics, and economics. The curriculum is designed to sharpen student's description and analysis skills as they become aware of the impact of history on the world around them. Emphasis is placed on students understanding the rights and responsibilities of citizens in contributing to the common good. Students collaborate to investigate the major ideas, eras, themes, developments, turning points, chronology, and cause-effect relationships in United States history. Simulations, debates and research projects provide a variety of activities in addition to the adopted text material.

Pre-Algebra

Pre-Algebra extends and culminates previous math skills and concepts from 7th grade math, transitioning students to the more specialized math courses of algebra and geometry. The formal methods of algebra introduced in seventh grade are extended as students explore linear functions and solve more complex equations and inequalities. Students model problems with mathematical functions represented by graphs and equations, eventually learning to interpret the slope of various functions in contextual situations. They connect measurement and geometry by exploring properties of geometric figures by solving problems involving sides/angles of triangles to find unknown measures. Students work with squares and square roots using basic geometric theorems such as the Pythagorean Theorem. They build on their experience of organizing and interpreting data, creating displays for 2 data sets in order to compare, analyze and draw conclusions. Mean, median and mode are used to summarize and describe information and students expand their work with probability to deal with more complex situations and displays. To prepare for high school level math courses, students deal with additional key topics involving numbers and operations. This includes scientific notation and exponents in expressions containing both numbers and variables. To better understand the full breadth of the real-number system, students are introduced to sets of numbers including rational and simple irrational numbers. Additionally, students refine their reasoning and problem-solving skills as they move more fully into the symbolic world of algebra. They learn to communicate mathematical ideas, to make generalizations, to draw logical conclusions and to verify the reasonableness of their solutions.

Algebra

Algebra is the first year in a three-year college prep math sequence. Algebra focuses on the structure of the real number system. This course examines symbolic representations in solving real-world problems. Linear functions, quadratic functions, systems of equations, and problem solving are some of the topics within the enriching course outline. Graphing, both as a means of displaying data and analyzing data in one or two dimensions, is an integral part of this course. A solid foundation in arithmetic and pre-algebra skills is essential for success in this course.

A scientific calculator, ruler and graph paper are required.

When IMS students become juniors at Mercer Island High School, they will have the option to have their middle school Algebra grade posted to their Mercer Island High School transcript. If a student chooses not to have their Algebra grade on their transcript, they will not receive high school credit for the course.

Honors Geometry

Honors Geometry is the second year in a three-year college prep math sequence. In this course, students will develop a logical system of thought. Honors Geometry focuses on plane geometry with integration of some space and coordinate geometry. This course develops geometric concepts using formal proofs and algebraic applications. Algebra is used extensively for areas, volumes, lengths, angle measures, and graphing. Thus, successful completion of Algebra I is essential.

A scientific calculator, ruler, protractor, compass, and graph paper are required.

When IMS students become juniors at Mercer Island High School, they will have the option to have their middle school Honors Geometry grade posted to their Mercer Island High School transcript. If a student chooses not to have their middle school Honors Geometry grade on their transcript, they will not receive high school credit for the course.

Science 8

Eighth grade science is a full year course emphasizing Earth Science and designed to build an understanding that Earth is a complex and changing planet with interacting systems of land, water, air, and life. Topics include meteorology, plate tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes, minerals and rocks, astronomy, geologic time, and natural resources. These topics are aligned with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements and Grade Level Expectations.

Classroom activities will be inquiry based, emphasizing the scientific process. Students will experience a variety of laboratory activities, guest speakers, hands-on projects, and multi-media presentations. Investigations are facilitated by using the STC (Science and Technology Concepts) texts and materials-based kits: “Catastrophic Events” and “Earth in Space”. Students also use the Heath *Earth Science* text at home to extend and add depth to the in-class curriculum. Students will be asked to write two formal lab reports per trimester and conduct two independent research projects during the school year.

Electives

Aerospace

From hot air balloons to airplanes to rockets, how has humankind developed the science of flight? Where will the space age take us? Aerospace students build five major hands-on projects: hot air balloons, kites, gliders, airplanes, and rockets, as well as a multitude of other small flight experiments and demonstrations—all designed to teach and reinforce the four forces of flight and Bernoulli’s Principle. Students also investigate the physics of air pressure and past and future developments in the space program. Class may include both 7th and 8th grade students, but is not repeatable. Lab/supply fee required.

Art Series: (Art I & II) (Two – one trimester classes)

Art and Design is a comprehensive visual art course that introduces the basics of design and creative expression. Students learn to think and create like an artist. They will craft artworks by tapping into their creativity, using their imagination and learning to apply the concepts of the elements and principles of design. Art and Design takes students on an exploration of a variety of art mediums and techniques such as drawing, painting, ceramics, mixed media and photography. Each unit of study will focus on an art style from a variety of artists, cultures and times. The second trimester is a continuation of the first trimester but with more focus on the principles of design and longer-term projects that require the technical and conceptual skills learned in Art I. Students who complete Art & Design I & II will take the Washington State Classroom-based Assessment in the visual arts.

Art III (Pre-requisite - Art I and II Series and this class can be repeated)

This is a trimester-long class that continues the format of the ART I and II series in that students will work with a variety of media in ceramics, drawing and painting. Each unit of study will emphasize the creative process and critical thinking. Art III students are encouraged to pursue their artistic style of seeing and using visual imagery as a means of communication. Student input is encouraged in the selection of projects to allow for more personalized instruction. Classes can be repeated because projects will be different depending on the students' interests. This course has a \$20 supply fee.

Debate

Want to speak your mind? Want to be able to articulate your arguments in a positive and effective way? Want to learn about all sorts of issues happening around the school and the world? Debate is for you! You will work with a partner to come up with great ideas on how to argue your case in a debate competition. We discuss issues that you choose. You will learn how to research effectively, write persuasively, and speak clearly to present your information. Debate is an exciting and challenging course that will definitely stretch your mind and help you figure out what your position is on all of the current problems facing the world today.

Drama I (No pre-requisite)

Drama I will introduce students to many different areas of theatre. Students will study basic theatre history, movement, voice acting, character development through monologue study, as well as scene development and improvisation in both individual and group exercises.

Drama II (Pre-requisite-Drama I or Instructor Approval)

Drama II offers students the chance to further explore theatre. Studies will focus on scene work, movement techniques, improvisation character work. Students will also be exposed to Shakespearean theatre, script writing, and technical elements of theatre such as makeup, costume, and set design. The course work will vary from trimester to trimester, therefore this class is repeatable.

Fitness

This course is offered to 7th and 8th grade students. The Fitness class is designed to provide students with the skills and information needed to begin a personalized exercise program to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Students participate in pre- and post-fitness assessments in which they measure and analyze their own levels of fitness based on the five components of physical fitness: muscular strength, endurance, cardiovascular fitness, flexibility, and body composition. In this course, students research the benefits of physical activity, as well as the techniques, principles, and guidelines of exercise to keep them safe and healthy. Activities include but are not limited to: strength training, cardio-based games, walking, yoga and fitness technology.

French 1 MS (Year-long course) (Pre-requisite – French 7)

This year-long class continues the progression from 7th grade French. The five trimesters (two in 7th grade and three in 8th grade) are the equivalent of the first year French course at the high school. Successful completion of this course will allow the student to register for second-year French at the high school. Students will continue their study of the French language through listening, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural exploration. Students who did not take French in 7th grade may not take French in 8th grade. The workbook from 7th grade will be used, or students may purchase a new one.

Leadership (Year-long course)

Calling all leaders! Leadership class a community of students who are passionate about helping enhance the culture of IMS. Play a key role in creating spirit days, appreciation projects, school-wide activities, and much more. In this project-based course you will learn how to lead with confidence, work in groups, and take your dreams for IMS and make them a reality. Leadership is open to 7th and 8th graders. ASB officers must take this elective all year.

Mandarin Chinese 1 MS (Year-long course) (Pre-requisite – Chinese 7)

This year-long course is a continuation of Mandarin Chinese 7 with the expectation that students have a basic knowledge of Chinese pinyin, character creation/evolution, and sentence structures. The focus of Mandarin Chinese 1 is to provide students with a solid foundation of Chinese pinyin, vocabulary, grammar and culture. Students will have opportunities to develop listening comprehension, speaking, reading comprehension and writing skills. Chinese culture will be introduced through projects, readings, songs and videos. Successful completion of this course will allow the student to register for second-year Mandarin Chinese at the high school. Students who did not take Mandarin Chinese in 7th grade may not take Mandarin Chinese in 8th grade. A workbook fee will be required.

Marine Biology

Our oceans are one of the last frontiers of exploration. Current issues that affect our oceans will eventually impact us all. In this course, students investigate, research and discuss topics including ocean exploration, ocean water chemistry, the impact of society on oceans, and of course, marine life. Through hands on activities including several dissections, students will learn about plant and animal forms ranging from microscopic plankton all the way up to some of the largest animals on earth. If you are fascinated by life at sea and the blue abyss, this course is for you! This course is open to both 7th and 8th grade students, but is not repeatable. Lab/supply fee is required.

Media Technology – Digital Storytelling

Have you ever wanted to make a movie or a podcast? Do you have great ideas? Interested in sharing your stories with the school on Gator Vision? Or maybe you just want to get better at tech. In this class, students will use a variety of technological tools to be part of the ever-evolving field of digital storytelling. A mix of video, audio design, and animation will be used to bring student ideas to life. Both fiction and nonfiction formats will be explored in this class. Students will work individually and in groups throughout the trimester. This is a fun class to learn how to work with others, share creative ideas, and demonstrate school spirit. Students will leave here ready to use the latest digital tools for future school projects and whenever else life calls for good storytelling.

Music (Year-long courses)

8th Grade Concert Band

The Concert Band is available to students who have previously taken 7th Grade Band or Beginning Instruments. Increased sophistication of literature and performance skills are the focus of the eighth grade band. Curriculum stresses heightened levels of player independence. Literature highlights the expressive elements of music. Skill building continues to be an important facet of the program, but the emphasis shifts increasingly toward expressive and sophisticated performance opportunities. All 8th grade band students have the opportunity to perform in small chamber ensembles. Selected students also perform with the orchestra. The Concert Band participates in the Eastshore Band Festival. Fee: \$15.00 shirt and \$4.00 binder. Any student enrolled in 8th Grade Band is eligible to participate in the IMS Jazz Band.

Choir

Students who enroll in the choir develop fundamental skills in choral singing such as breathing, posture, music reading, three and four-part harmony, performance technique, etc. No previous singing experiences or voice training is required, rather the desire and joy of learning a variety of songs in a fun, disciplined class setting. The choir participates in the school's music concerts, choral festivals, district wide Showcase concert as well as special school assemblies. Classes may include 6th, 7th and 8th grade students.

Orchestra 8

8th grade Orchestra is taught in conjunction with the 7th grade and meets on a daily basis. There is an increased sophistication of literature and performance skills. The orchestra rehearses as both a string and a full orchestra. The 7/8 Orchestra meets at the same time as 8th grade orchestra and has selected wind/percussion players who rehearse with both groups, providing the "full orchestra" experience. The 8th grade band maintains and develops appropriate instrumentation for a comprehensive orchestra experience for all enrolled students. Active and focused participation in the ensemble learning process is essential for success in this course." Students participate in the Eastshore Orchestra Festival and other activities throughout the year. Fee- Shirt \$18 (used both years)

PE 7/8

PE is required for one trimester; classes may include both 7th and 8th grade students with focus on advanced team sports. The curriculum will still meet Washington State Expectation but through recreational activities and strategies. Students will be required to change into an IMS PE uniform. This uniform has not been changed for many years. We encourage students to reuse previous uniforms from siblings or family members. Students are also required to wear supportive athletic shoes to decrease a chance of injury.

Photo/Film/Music

This survey course will provide opportunities for students to further appreciate the mass media forms of photography, film, and music. Students will be given experiences in creating digital photography, gain further understanding about components of film and movies, and understand the significance of music in our modern society. **NOTE: This course does not meet the criteria for completion of IMS's fine arts requirement.** No repeats.

Introduction to Programming

This course teaches students the basics of drawing and animation using the JavaScript programming language. The structure and syntax of JavaScript are similar to those of other entry level programming languages, so this class creates a solid foundation for future programming. No programming experience is necessary for students to be successful in this class.

Intermediate Programming

The intermediate programming course teaches students the fundamentals of the Apple programming language X-Code/Swift with the objective of being able to write simple interactive programs for iOS devices. Students who take this course should have studied programming outside of school or have taken the introduction to programming course as a prerequisite as they will encounter situations that require higher than entry-level programming skills.

Global Robotics

In this engineering elective course, students will cultivate their awareness and understanding of global issues facing us today through researching imminent social problems pertaining to global health, a safer world, and our environment. Students will then work through the engineering design process to develop a solution to a specific problem. Lego Mindstorms drag and drop coding software and EV3 kits will be used for building prototypes. STEM connections (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) are woven in throughout the learning. Innovation, creativity, and collaboration will drive this trimester long course. Experience programming Lego Mindstorms is required.

Social Justice – Race/Ethnicity, Sex/Gender, Sexual Identity

This course examines the role that identity and privilege play in everyone's lives, specifically examining the areas of race/ethnicity, sex/gender, and sexual identity. The class gives students a chance to learn about what goes on in our country and to empathize with people from many different backgrounds—starting with the other students in the class. You will have opportunities to create group projects, conduct individual investigations, and participate in many group discussions about society and our place in it. If you love learning about our communities, our rights, each other, and the differences we can make together, then this is the class for you!

Social Justice – Socioeconomic Status, Ability/Disability, Mental Health, Appearance

This course examines the role that identity and privilege play in everyone's lives, specifically examining the areas of socioeconomic status, ability/disability, mental health, and appearance. The class gives students a chance to learn about what goes on in our country and to empathize with people from many different backgrounds and in many different life situations—starting with the other students in the class. You will have opportunities to create group projects, conduct individual investigations, and participate in many group discussions about society and our place in it. If you love learning about our communities, our rights, each other, and the differences we can make, then this is the class for you!

Spanish 1 MS (Year-long course) (Pre-requisite – Spanish 7)

This year-long class continues the progression from 7th grade Spanish. The five trimesters (two in 7th grade and three in 8th grade) are the equivalent of the first year Spanish course at the high school. Successful completion of this course will allow the student to register for second year Spanish in high school. Students learn the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students are introduced in a variety of ways to the diverse cultures of Spanish speaking countries, including but not limited to: geography, customs and holidays. Students are expected to communicate in Spanish as they progress in the Spanish program. Students who did not take Spanish in 7th grade may not take Spanish in 8th grade. Workbook from 7th grade will be used or students may purchase a new workbook.

"Speak Up!"

The ability to speak publicly (whether the group is large or small) is one of the most vital skills you can develop. In "Speak Up!" you will learn how to tell a captivating story, introduce a new concept, make a compelling argument, and even tell a joke that actually gets a laugh! Some of the types of speeches you will learn to deliver are Informative, Demonstrative, Persuasive, Q&A, and Entertaining. "Speak Up!" will provide you the opportunity to grow in your public speaking in a fun, supportive, and engaging environment.

Student Mentor

Student Mentors help peers with special needs by participating in electives, working on academic skills and assisting in social settings. The student mentor will explore issues involving diversity and leadership skills. Assignments include: goal setting and a final reflective essay. Motivation, compassion, initiative and responsibility are characteristics needed by student mentors.

Study Hall

Not being offered because of 30 minutes of Gator Time, scheduled for all students every day except Wednesday.

Teacher's Assistant

Teacher's Assistant - Business Center, Library, Teacher (One Trimester; Pass/Fail Grading)

Business Center TA - log in all students coming in and out of the Business Center and assist students to print documents from thumb drives, server and email. Students will routinely troubleshoot issues, including jammed printers, new printer cartridges, etc. Students may also inventory and clean technology equipment in classrooms and iBook carts, fix iBook carts, check power cords and replace when necessary, replace missing keys from keyboards, check printer for tone, and may assist with rebuilding laptop and desktop computers.

Library TA - staff the circulation desk, where they check books in and out of the library and provide basic library information to library users. Other duties include shelving books, processing library materials, and keeping the library tidy and clean.

Being a Library TA requires an aptitude for detail-oriented work:

- Ability to learn library shelving systems
- Ability to alphabetize
- Consistent attention to detail
- Ability to work independently
- Initiative to identify and complete tasks

A Library TA is expected to perform their duties in a courteous and helpful way. They act as positive role models for other students by following library policies and regulations at all times. The best candidates for this job are enthusiastic about books and reading. A Library TA will learn how to use libraries well, and develop lifelong skills.

Office TA - work in the Student Attendance Office. Routine tasks include picking up attendance, delivering messages, filing, waiting on students at the counter, and general office work as assigned. An Office TA must make sure that phones and ear buds are put away while in the office and on deliveries.

Teacher TA - work in an assigned classroom. Routine tasks may include preparing handouts, creating bulletin boards, organizing classroom papers, running errands, correcting papers, filing, or other duties as assigned.

WEB Leader Class

WEB (*Where Everybody Belongs*) is a 6th grade transition program where 8th grade WEB Leaders help the 6th graders feel safe, informed, and connected to our community at IMS. The WEB Leaders enrolled in this course will have additional practice to develop who they are as a leader, as well as planning and leading activities for the 6th graders. Students interested in being a WEB Leader should take a trimester of this elective class.

Inspired Writing

Do you want to become a better writer and have a bit of fun doing it? If so, this class is definitely for you. In Inspired Writing we will combine critical reading and purpose driven writing to help you to write powerfully and mindfully. We will inform, persuade, and entertain a variety of audiences through our writing of poetry, essays, memoirs, and many other writing forms.

Yearbook (Trimesters one and two)

Want to know the theme, or better yet, *pick* the theme of the yearbook? Want to publish a real book, take photographs, and write creative stories? Want to learn software you can use the rest of your life? Seventh and eighth grade students will work collaboratively on theme, page layout and design, photography, interviewing, and copy/caption writing in order to produce this historical document.

Familiarity with photo-based and publishing-based computer software programs is helpful; however, Pixler and OnLine Design will be taught. Returning yearbook students are encouraged to apply as editors for the new yearbook staff. This elective is challenging and requires each student to take responsibility for meeting real deadlines for a real publishing company, but it is also very fun!

Yoga

Decrease stress and take deep breaths while improving strength, power and flexibility. This trimester course supports the IMS Physical Education requirement while placing emphasis on individual activity and personal health. Students will be required to change for Yoga into comfortable clothing that will support their ability to move confidently. Students should avoid wearing low cut necklines, skirts, pants or shorts with a low-waist, and shoes that are non-supportive (boots, flats, open-toe shoes, etc.).

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